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SUBJECT: RWANDA - MONTHLY POLITICAL ROUND-UP

REF: A. PARIS 1584  
    [B](#). IGALI 450  
    [C](#). KIGALI 536  
    [D](#). KIGALI 603

[1](#)1. (U) In this edition:

- Release of Mucyo Commission report on French Responsibility in 1994 Genocide
- Former ICTR Prosecutor on Rwandan Justice System, Universal Jurisdiction, and Transfer of Cases
- Legislative Campaign Kick-Off - Some Reporters Shut Out
- Kagame Talks Tough in Interview

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Mucyo Commission Report on French Responsibility in Genocide  
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[1](#)2. (U) On August 5, Minister of Justice Tharcisse Karugarama unveiled the 500-page report on the alleged French role in the 1994 genocide produced by the Mucyo Commission (named after commission head and former Minister of Justice Jean de Dieu Mucyo). The report assigns 33 senior French political and military officials with various degrees of complicity in the tragedy, including late French President Francois Mitterand. Among other allegations, the report accuses French forces of providing training to the genocidal Interahamwe, of being present at roadblocks where Tutsis were killed, and of instigating and participating in rape. Since its release, Minister of Information Louise Mushikiwabo and Minister of Foreign Affairs Rosemary Museminali joined Karugarama in giving media comments calling for further examination by the international community of the charges outlined in the report. Prosecutor General Martin Ngoga has not ruled out bringing charges against some individuals named in the document.

[1](#)3. (SBU) Comment: The release of the report, which was commissioned in 2006, comes at a time when Government of Rwanda (GOR) relations with France remain at a low point (also see ref A). French indictments of senior GOR leadership continue to receive negative local attention (see below) and French nationals seeking to enter Rwanda to work for the EU election observer team have experienced difficulties obtaining visas. Even if the GOR brings formal charges against those named in the report, the GOR will continue to look for some formal expression of contrition on the part of the French government (beyond the general comments by President Sarkozy some time ago mildly expressing regret); improved relations will otherwise be a very long

road. End comment.

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Goldstone on Justice in Rwanda  
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14. (U) Justice Richard Goldstone, former Chief Prosecutor for the UN International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia and Rwanda (ICTY and ICTR, respectively), presented a lecture, "The Role of Justice in the Aftermath of Massive Human Rights Violations," at the Rwandan Supreme Court August 15. Minister of Justice Tharcisse Karugarama and Prosecutor General Martin Ngoga were present, and Vice President of the Supreme Court Professor Sam Rugege moderated the event. After giving his remarks, Goldstone took questions from the audience, and responded to Karugarama and Ngoga's queries on the concept of universal jurisdiction.

15. (U) Goldstone gave a brief history of the work of the ICTR within the context of international justice and of his own role and interaction with the GOR during his tenure as Chief Prosecutor from 1994 to 1996. Calling dehumanization the "common element" to situations of massive human rights violations, Goldstone cited the importance of public acknowledgment and education as well as justice for reconciliation to occur. Justice, he said, is but "one tool" available to achieve it. He proffered that, without the ICTY, "the ICTR would not have happened." Among the successes of the body, Goldstone cited the end to denials of genocide in Rwanda, the creation of an historic record of the tragedy, the conviction of some of its leaders, and the definition of rape as a form of genocide.

16. (U) After his remarks, Goldstone was peppered by questions from Minister of Justice Karugarama and the other panelists, particularly on his position on the transfer of ICTR cases to Rwanda from Arusha and on the much-maligned concept of universal jurisdiction (ref B and previous). Goldstone carefully expressed his support for the transfer of cases, acknowledging that "home-grown" justice is the ideal and calling international renditions of justice "second best." Responding to allegations from Ngoga and Rugege about the propensity of universal jurisdiction to be "abused," Goldstone noted the principle may be positively employed by the GOR to try genocidaires living in exile abroad. Karugarama implored Goldstone to read the troublesome French and Spanish indictments (ref C and previous) and to provide "a neutral opinion" on their veracity. Goldstone conceded an international convention on universal jurisdiction which implements regulation might be useful, but averred that justice following situations of massive human rights violations can be "a political and moral compromise."

17. (SBU) Comment: The reaction of the GOR panelists and the largely Rwandan audience to Goldstone's lecture suggested greater interest in securing public support from a respected judicial figure for the GOR's position on universal jurisdiction than in the specific details of his presentation. The GOR's campaign against the principle has shifted a bit, from initial dismissal of the concept outright to a call for some sort of regulatory mechanism for it. With the Spanish and French indictments outstanding, this push will continue. End comment.

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Campaigns Kick Off, Journalists Excluded  
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18. (SBU) The Rwandan campaign season officially began August 25 with a rally sponsored by the dominant Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF). The rally, held at a Kigali stadium, drew a large crowd of supporters who enthusiastically greeted party head President Paul Kagame. Reporters from BBC and VOA reported that they had been turned away from covering the event (ref D).

19. (C) Comment: The RPF's campaign efforts are widely visible in the capital city, through billboards, slogan-covered cars

playing loud music extolling the party, and on innumerable hats and t-shirts worn by the populace. The other parties, both those in coalition with and running separately from the RPF, are more difficult to spot (septel). Coverage of the RPF rally was extensive in government media organs - the BBC and VOA absence is another example of the GOR's ill-advised, ongoing campaign to shut out journalists who work for media entities that present information the Kagame regime finds objectionable. End comment.

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Kagame on French, Belgian, Congolese Relations, and Darfur  
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¶10. (U) In an interview conducted by Belgian journalist Colette Breakman September 6, President Kagame called for serious consideration by the French government of the conclusions of the Mucyo Commission report (see above). He said any action against French officials named in the report would be a question for the Rwandan judicial officials to decide. On the subject of the French and Spanish indictments decide. On the subject of the French and Spanish indictments and the use (and abuse) of universal jurisdiction, he noted Rwanda had the support of the African Union, and would raise the matter in the United Nations.

¶11. (U) Kagame noted Belgium's colonial role in Rwanda, and criticized its efforts to enforce the French and Spanish indictments (when Rwandan delegations travel to Brussels, for example), without examining the merits of the individual cases. Notwithstanding complaints in the commercial sector of unfair treatment, he said Rwanda treated the Belgians and other foreign businessmen no differently than local businesses.

¶12. (U) On Congo, Kagame reviewed recent history in the Kivus, noting the failed efforts of the Congolese army (against the advice of Rwanda and the international community) to defeat renegade Tutsi General Laurent Nkunda, and said he had told President Kabila that he was "playing with extremists," and the strategy would ultimately backfire. Saying he had not spoken with Kabila in some time, Kagame said he had the sense of being "used, abused, and accused," and would simply let matters drop - he had senior officials following events in the Kivus, but would no longer involve himself. Efforts to interest the DRC in a revived three-member CEPGL (Economic Conference of the Great Lakes, composed of Rwanda, Burundi and the DRC) had largely failed, as have efforts to exchange ambassadors, he said.

¶13. (U) On Darfur and the Deputy UNAMID Commander, Rwandan General Karenzi Karake, Kagame spoke unequivocally: "If Karenzi leaves, the entire Rwandan contingent will leave Darfur - the same day." Certain western nations were abusing concepts of international justice in their indictments of senior Rwandan officials, and if the Rwandan commander were "attacked," Rwanda would also be under assault and would respond.  
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